

PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG PEIHOA, TIMELINE PHOTOGRAPHY



A group of 81 young adults from around Australia visited the Australian Federal Parliament to learn about politics and represent the Church and its beliefs to their nation's leaders.

Young Adults Represent Church to Australian Federal Parliament

By Marianne Walters

In May 2009 81 Australian young adults responded to the call to “Get Involved!” (*Teachings of*

Gordon B. Hinckley [1997], 128), representing the Church in a visit to Australia’s Federal Parliament and

meeting with Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles later the same day.

This was the third such young adult group to visit Australia’s Parliament. The purpose of their visit was three-fold: to thank politicians for their leadership of the country, to learn about the nation’s leaders and how they govern, and to

Young, Single, and Active in Sydney

By Don Searle, Church Magazines

What is it like to be a young single adult in Sydney, Australia?

Young single adults here might say they face the same challenges shared by their peers in countries around the world. And yet young single adults in Sydney feel they have some unique opportunities.

“We’re the same,” says Brittany Jones, because “the gospel is the same everywhere.” But, she says, young single adults in Sydney “have a unique opportunity in terms of multiculturalism to open gates and doorways to

the rest of the world.”

Brittany is the next youngest of the four children of Trevor Jones, president of the Sydney Australia Hyde Park Stake. Brittany; her older brother, Ben; her older sister, Ashley; and her younger sister, Kate; have all taken part in the stake’s young single adult activities.

President Jones explained that single members make up more than 50 percent of the stake. A large percentage of the stake’s approximately 350 young single adults are students at one of the five major universities within

stake boundaries. Many come from other countries; they will later go back to their home countries and strengthen the Church there.

What are the challenges the remaining young single adults face?

First, there are so few Latter-day Saints compared to the general population in Australia. This may affect how they maintain friendships, maintain personal spirituality, and find potential marriage partners.

Second, challenges to spirituality are constant, Ashley says—invitations to take a drink, to have a

cigarette, to go to a club with friends who do not share LDS beliefs. “I think because of growing up in the Church and having parents who taught us what is right, it’s easier to say no,” she adds. Friends are usually accepting when she says drinking or smoking is not something she wants to do. “It’s not as hard as it used to be.”

In spite of the challenges, young single adults in Australia enjoy great opportunities, including the frequent opportunity to reach out to those of other faiths. For example, young single adults have met with members of Australia’s Parliament. (See article above.) “There are really

inform politicians of what members of the Church believe.

Local Church leaders nominated young people they felt would gain something from such an experience and whom they thought would be good ambassadors for the Church.

Attending training and the actual event in spite of car troubles, rugby injuries, university exams, and wedding plans, these young adults did all they could to prepare to represent the Church, from learning the appropriate behavior and dress to preparing spiritually.

One young adult from Perth, Australia, gave this explanation for the spiritual

preparation: "My reason for attending is to develop friendships with the leading figures of our nation so that as they govern they can better represent our beliefs. They can also feel of our spirit and in some way turn their hearts a little more toward our Heavenly Father."

On the day of the event the young adults participated in a spirited debate over whether Australia should have a bill of rights. Speaker of the House, Harry Jenkins, chaired the debate and complimented both the caliber of the arguments and the respectful behavior of the debaters.

Small groups visited various politicians and, later, the president of the

Parliamentary Press Gallery hosted a question-and-answer session.

Elder Holland, accompanied by Elder David S. Baxter, Pacific Area President, and Elder Terry Vinson, Area Seventy, addressed a private luncheon with politicians and academics in the Federal Parliament.

Elder Baxter commended the young adults for their excellent ambitions and examples. Of the 81 young adults, 71 had completed or were pursuing post-secondary education, 41 had served missions, and 26 spoke a foreign language.

Elder Holland told them that each member of the

Church is destined to be a light on the hill. In this dispensation we are engaging in dialogue with the world and having an influence, he said. The day concluded with a testimony meeting at the stake center in Canberra.

Many of the politicians were greatly impressed with the young adults.

David Bradbury, Member of Parliament, said: "As a group, you struck me as being an outstanding cross-section of your generation. You each brought great credit to the Church and our broader community in the way you presented yourself. I was inspired to see such an enthusiastic group of young leaders." ■

good opportunities for us to get the Church out there in Australia, where it's not that big as yet," Brittany says.

Young single adults look forward to multistake activities that bring larger groups together. A YSA conference at the end of December 2008, for example, involved members from New South Wales and Queensland. Along with counsel from Area Seventies (Elders Hans T. Sorensen and David J. Hoare), the young single adults enjoyed a temple trip, cultural activities, and social activities, including three dances and a New Year's Eve ball.

Kate Jones says the young single adults also often gather spontaneously

at someone's home, providing opportunities to spend time with people who have similar values.

A few years ago, Ashley Jones had the opportunity to attend the University of Utah for a semester. After she returned to Australia, she missed associating with so many young single Latter-day Saints. But opportunities provided through Church programs have helped her come to appreciate living where she does. "I've learned to love it," she says. "I wouldn't want to live anywhere else, honestly."

Through her growing up years, she enjoyed opportunities to work with missionaries in helping to teach the gospel. Now,



PHOTOGRAPH BY DON SEARLE

Singles in Sydney enjoy great opportunities, say members of the Jones family: Ben (left); Kate; their mother, Christina (seated); their father, Trevor; Brittany; and Ashley.

Sister Ashley Jones is serving as a full-time missionary in the Canada Calgary Mission.

Her sister Brittany talks of serving a mission too, when she reaches missionary age. For now, she is continuing her

university education and serving as a stake young single adult representative. "I love being a young single adult in Sydney. We have so many opportunities here," she says. "It's really exciting to be part of them." ■

New Area Leadership Assignments

The First Presidency has announced changes in area leadership assignments effective on August 1, 2009. All members of Area Presidencies are members of the First or Second Quorums of the Seventy.

Elder Donald L. Hallstrom has been called to serve in the Presidency of the Seventy following the call of Elder Neil L. Andersen to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

The First Presidency also announced the combining of the South America North and South America West Areas. The new area will be called the South America Northwest Area.

Presidency of the Seventy



RONALD A. RASBAND
ASSISTS IN ALL AREAS



CLAUDIO R. M. COSTA
1. NORTH AMERICA SOUTHWEST



STEVEN E. SNOW
2. UTAH NORTH
3. UTAH SALT LAKE CITY
4. UTAH SOUTH



WALTER F. GONZÁLEZ
5. NORTH AMERICA SOUTHEAST



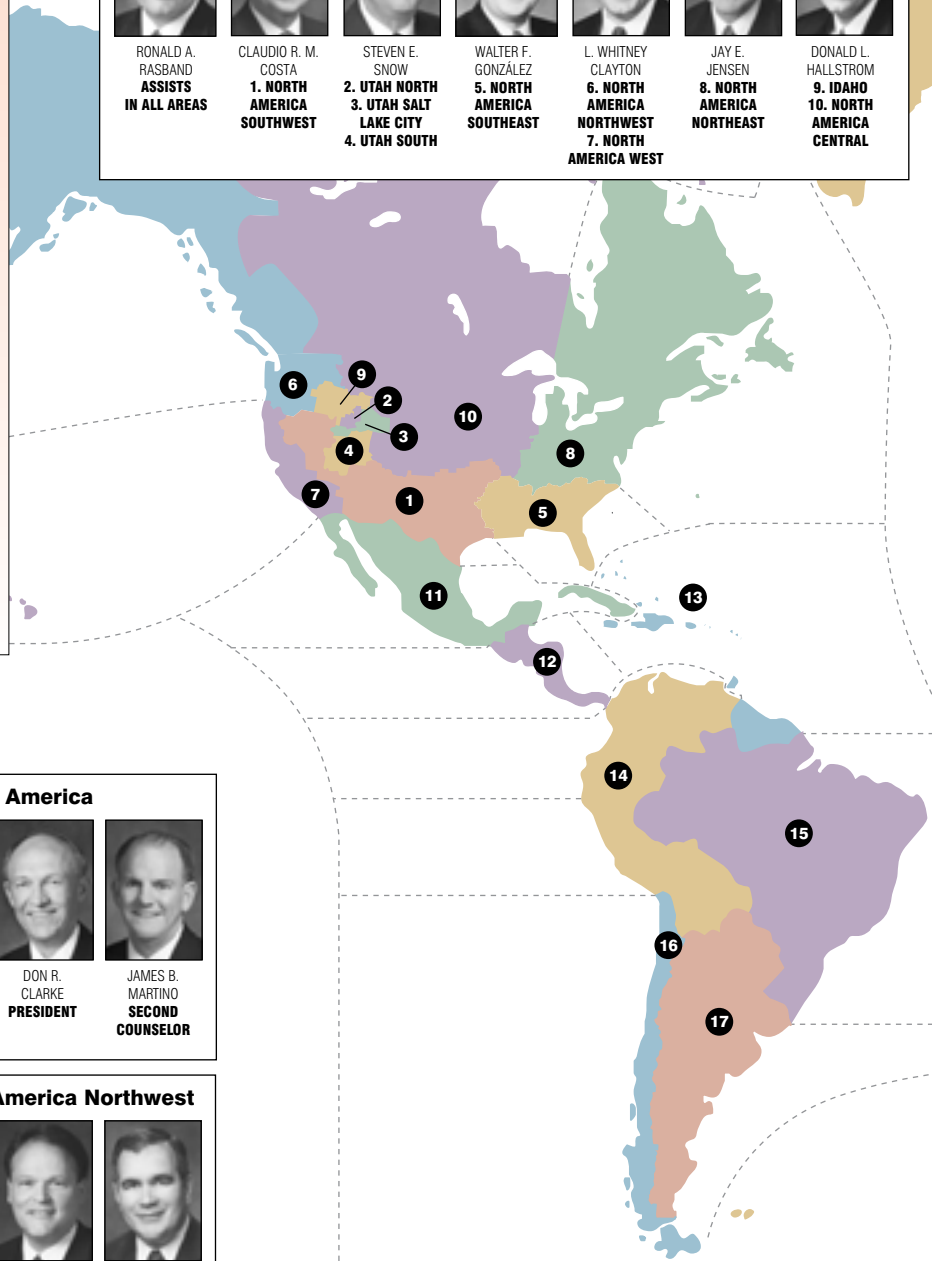
L. WHITNEY CLAYTON
6. NORTH AMERICA NORTHWEST
7. NORTH AMERICA WEST



JAY E. JENSEN
8. NORTH AMERICA NORTHEAST



DONALD L. HALLSTROM
9. IDAHO
10. NORTH AMERICA CENTRAL



11. Mexico



BENJAMÍN DE HOYOS
FIRST COUNSELOR



DANIEL L. JOHNSON
PRESIDENT



OCTAVIANO TENORIO
SECOND COUNSELOR

12. Central America



ENRIQUE R. FALABELLA
FIRST COUNSELOR



DON R. CLARKE
PRESIDENT



JAMES B. MARTINO
SECOND COUNSELOR

13. Caribbean



GARY J. COLEMAN
FIRST COUNSELOR



FRANCISCO J. VINAS
PRESIDENT



WILFORD ANDERSEN
SECOND COUNSELOR

14. South America Northwest



EDUARDO GAVARRET
FIRST COUNSELOR



MARCUS B. NASH
PRESIDENT



RAFAEL E. PINO
SECOND COUNSELOR

15. Brazil



STANLEY G. ELLIS
FIRST COUNSELOR



ULISSES SOARES
PRESIDENT



CARLOS A. GODOY
SECOND COUNSELOR

16. Chile



LAWRENCE E. CORBRIDGE
FIRST COUNSELOR



CARLOS H. AMADO
PRESIDENT



JORGE F. ZEBALLOS
SECOND COUNSELOR

17. South America South



CLAUDIO D. ZIVIC
FIRST COUNSELOR



SHAYNE M. BOWEN
PRESIDENT



MARCOS A. AIDUKAITIS
SECOND COUNSELOR

18. Europe



GÉRALD CAUSSÉ
FIRST COUNSELOR

ERICH W. KOPISCHKE
PRESIDENT

JOSÉ A. TEIXEIRA
SECOND COUNSELOR

19. Europe East



KEVIN W. PEARSON
FIRST COUNSELOR

WOLFGANG H. PAUL
PRESIDENT

GREGORY A. SCHWITZER
SECOND COUNSELOR

20. Middle East/Africa North



BRUCE D. PORTER

PAUL B. PIEPER

ADMINISTERED FROM HEADQUARTERS

21. Africa West



CHRISTOFFEL GOLDEN JR.
FIRST COUNSELOR

CRAIG A. CARDON
PRESIDENT

JOHN B. DICKSON
SECOND COUNSELOR

22. Africa Southeast



F. MICHAEL WATSON
FIRST COUNSELOR

PAUL E. KOELLIKER
PRESIDENT

DALE G. RENLUND
SECOND COUNSELOR

23. Asia



KENT D. WATSON
FIRST COUNSELOR

ANTHONY D. PERKINS
PRESIDENT

CARL B. PRATT
SECOND COUNSELOR

24. Asia North



YOON HWAN CHOI
FIRST COUNSELOR

GARY E. STEVENSON
PRESIDENT

KOICHI AOYAGI
SECOND COUNSELOR

25. Philippines



WON YONG KO
FIRST COUNSELOR

KEITH R. EDWARDS
PRESIDENT

MICHAEL JOHN U. TEH
SECOND COUNSELOR

26. Pacific



TAD R. CALLISTER
FIRST COUNSELOR

DAVID S. BAXTER
PRESIDENT

JAMES J. HAMULA
SECOND COUNSELOR



The USNS Comfort is an oil tanker converted into a floating hospital. A small contingent of member volunteers was aboard during a 2009 humanitarian trip.

Church Offers “Comfort” from Floating Hospital

By Heather Whittle, Church Magazines

Dozens of LDS humanitarian volunteers rotated on and off the United States Naval Ship *Comfort* on a four-month humanitarian mission this summer as part of a government-sponsored mission to provide medical care to countries in the Caribbean and Central and South America.

The *Comfort* was converted from an oil tanker into a hospital ship in 1987. Its primary purpose is to serve as a combat trauma facility, treating wounded U.S. military. However, its secondary mission is to provide full hospital services to support U.S. disaster relief and humanitarian operations around the world.

The ship carried a crew

of about 800, but after all the rotations, some 1,200 medical professionals, engineers, and volunteers from the armed forces, public health services, and nongovernmental organizations were involved as the ship visited Antigua and Barbuda, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Panama as part of Continuing Promise 2009, an annual humanitarian civic assistance operation.

Church Humanitarian Services further contributed by sending 10 shipping containers of medical equipment and supplies, which were unloaded along the way

at each country.

With the 2009 mission beginning in Port Au Prince, Haiti, and ending in Corinto, Nicaragua, organizers planned to perform more than 90,000 medical procedures, including 3,000 surgeries, as well as several community relations projects.

Those who volunteered through LDS Charities did so for many reasons, but all seem to have learned a common lesson: all are children of God.

“On this trip I’ve met sick people, hungry people, ambassadors, dignitaries, and high-ranking officers,” said team leader and nonmedical volunteer Jenna Rix. “We are all children of a Heavenly Father who places us together to help each other.”

“Heavenly Father loves all of His children,” said Melissa Elmer, a registered

nurse from Highland, Utah, USA. “He will put people in our lives who will touch us, and He allows us to touch others.”

Angela Berrett, part of the LDS envoy and a registered nurse, worked with an orphanage in Haiti. She recalled a four-year-old girl who was “running around wild.” To keep her out of the workers’ way, Sister Berrett picked the girl up and held her.

“She sat in my arms for a minute or two, and next thing I knew, she had just snuggled into my arms,” she said. “She laid there for an hour, and every once in a while she would readjust.”

Sister Berrett wondered if the girl had ever been hugged like that before, but concluded, “She needed me as much as I needed her.” ■

BeSmart Firesides Kick Off

On August 25, the Church’s BeSmart program will begin two months of fun and informative firesides across 38 locations in 20 states.

Dedicated to preparing youth for higher education, the BeSmart firesides and Web site offer advice about college preparation and provide information on attending institute or a Church college or university.

The BeSmart firesides will inform prospective college students of the purpose of continuing education, the options CES offers, and how to transition to college education.

Youth are encouraged to attend in order to meet

with other youth, to gain valuable information about higher education, and to learn about the opportunities available to them.

Visit BeSmart.com for 2009 fireside locations. All firesides will begin at 7:00 p.m. ■

AROUND THE CHURCH

Thousands Participate in U.S. Day of Service

Members on both ends of the United States organized a Day of Service on April 25, 2009, when tens of thousands of Latter-day Saints, along with friends and neighbors, donated their time, their money, and their talents to their communities.

Interfaith volunteers stocked shelves, painted fences, picked up trash, donated blood, planted

gardens, assembled emergency kits, served food, and constructed homes in their communities, among other projects.

Working under the umbrella of Mormon Helping Hands, stakes and wards across the nation organized various service projects in their areas.

The 96 stakes in the North America Southeast Area joined with people

from various communities to serve while, thousands of miles away, Southern California reported approximately 25,000 volunteers from Bakersfield to the Mexican border.

“It’s powerful when like-minded people join together to meet a wide spectrum of needs in diverse communities. We can bring help and hope to others no matter what their circumstances,” said Elder Walter F. González of the Presidency of the Seventy, who helped oversee volunteer efforts in the southeast area of the United States.

Elder González challenged more than 665 congregations from the southeastern states to join with other service organizations and municipalities to serve in what was named “The Helping

Hands and Linking Arms Project.”

Meanwhile, in Southern California, yellow-vested volunteers served under the Mormon Helping Hands banner of “Community Service, Making Our Communities a Better Place.”

The North America West Area reported approximately 50,000 total hours

of service in the one-day concentrated effort.

“It was a phenomenal success and very, very well

received,” said Elder John C. Dalton, North America West Area Seventy. “We were pleased to do it.” ■

Church, Mutombo Hospital Partner

A new partnership between the Church and the Dikembe Mutombo Foundation promises an additional water source for the Biamba Marie Mutombo Hospital and Research Center, located in Kinshasa, the capital city of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The not-for-profit hospital, which opened in 2007, is the vision of Dikembe Mutombo, who retired this year after 18 seasons in the U.S. National Basketball Association. The facility currently has 150 beds with a planned capacity of 300.

The hospital is mindful of its water utilization both in quality and quantity and already has a system that treats water before and after it is used. However, the existing public system has a slow flow rate, which prevents on-site water tanks from filling to capacity. This project will help provide a consistent flow of clean water for the hospital.

“The city of Kinshasa has but one dialysis center, and it is overburdened and unable to meet demand,” Mr. Mutombo said while in Salt Lake City to discuss the



Members of the Searcy Ward, North Little Rock Arkansas Stake, joined with members of the community to help clean a cemetery behind a Methodist meetinghouse from 1857 that is undergoing restoration.

project in a meeting with Church leaders. “The supplemental water source helps us accomplish the

first step in adding a 10-bed dialysis unit that would serve several hundred patients per year.”

WORLD BRIEFS

FamilySearch Adds Canadian Censuses

FamilySearch recently added the 1851, 1861, and 1871 Canada Census indexes to its online collection, which already included the 1881 and 1916 Canada censuses. There are plans to add the 1891 Canada census shortly. The searchable online databases, found at FamilySearch.org, contain some 17 million records. Free public access to these indexed censuses will make it easier for Canadians to extend their knowledge of their family’s history.

Humanitarian Groups Meet in Salt Lake

Hundreds gathered in Salt Lake City for the 17th annual National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) conference in April 2009. NVOAD is a coalition of more than 50 nonprofit organizations, including Latter-day Saint Charities, the American Red Cross, and the Salvation Army, that work in disaster relief preparedness, response, and recovery throughout the world. Holding the conference in Salt Lake City was a recognition of the Church’s active humanitarian efforts.

Tongan Scriptures Available in New Format

The Tongan edition of the triple combination, containing the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price, is now available online at scriptures.lds.org/to.

The online version of the triple combination in Tongan includes footnotes, maps, and photographs and allows the reader to mark the scriptures and perform key word searches.

Tongan is the 13th language to be added to the Church’s scriptures Web site.

Book of Mormon Published in Guarani

In April 2009, the First Presidency announced the publication of the Book of Mormon in Guarani, a dialect spoken mainly in Paraguay. This full translation of the Book of Mormon replaces the edition of Book of Mormon Selections that has been available since 1982.

The full Book of Mormon is currently published in 82 languages. Book of Mormon Selections is available in another 25 languages. ■

According to the World Health Organization, the average life expectancy in DR Congo is 46 to 49 years

of age. The facility has a staff of 450 and last year provided medical care to 22,000 patients. ■

Comment

Excited About Conference

We gained so many wonderful ideas from “Preparing Our Children for General Conference” in the March 2009 *Ensign* (p. 23). Our children were excited to listen to



conference and listened more intently than ever before. We are now reading the conference talks during family home evening as the article also suggested and have had more attentiveness and willingness to participate than at any other time. Thank you so much for these great suggestions.
Nancy Nichols
Utah, USA

A Thoughtful Article

I experienced a miracle as I turned to page 67 of the June *Ensign*. I had always thought that you really didn’t have much control over the thoughts that come to your mind.

As years went by, bad thoughts seemed to trouble me more and more. I prayed earnestly, but the thoughts didn’t go away. I figured I must be a bad person, even though I read my scriptures regularly and served in the Church. When I read the article “Thinking About What You Are Thinking About,” I felt my prayers were being answered by every word. I feel closer to my Heavenly Father. I know now how you can change your thoughts. Thank you!
Name Withheld

Addiction Recovery

I was so grateful to see the wonderful article, “Addiction Recovery: Healing One Step at a Time,” in the June 2009 *Ensign* (p. 67).

I am the facilitator for one of the addiction recovery groups here in Santa Rosa, California. We find many people do not respond to the word *addict* and do not believe this program is for them. Your covering the wide scope of the addiction recovery program will perhaps help them open their hearts to trying the program, leading to the healing of themselves and their families.

Lynn
California, USA ■